

# Mother happily spends Mother's Day protesting nuclear testing

I didn't hang around home this Mother's Day, waiting for my children to fix me dinner and shower me with flowers and nicely wrapped gifts. This year I did something completely different. I got arrested.

**Reporter's notebook and photos**  
by Karen Irmsher

I'm sure I could have found some simpler way to do it right here in Eugene. But instead, I traveled nearly 1,000 miles to share my first arrest with 745 others, more than half of whom were mothers, under the hot sun of the Nevada desert.

Four other University women also were arrested: Margaret Stalnaker, a junior studying political science; Lisa Page, a senior studying sociology; Pat Bryan, a graduate student in linguistics; and Charlotte Richardson, a freshman studying comparative literature.

Another University student, Sharon Bosserman, a senior journalism major, attended the demonstration but was not arrested.

Julia Ward Howe, the founder of Mother's Day, would have been proud of the 2,500 to 3,500 people, more than 90 percent women by my estimate, who gathered in the sweltering heat 65 miles northwest of Las Vegas, Nev. And she especially would have been pleased with those of us who crossed the cattle guard or crawled through the barbed wire fence to risk certain arrest.

Several of the day's speakers pointed out that it's the sort of thing Howe had in mind when she founded Mother's Day. Her original Mother's Day proclamation, written in 1870, urged women to stand together and demand an end to all war-making and preparations for war. Were she still alive, she'd have been crawling through that barbed wire with us.

At least 60 Oregonians, including 15 people from Eugene, were among what organizers

believe was the greatest number of protesters to gather, thus far, near the entrance to the Nuclear Test Site.

The U.S. Department of Energy continues to explode a nuclear device about once every three weeks in underground tunnels inside the site. The United States is clearly the front-runner in this race. Since 1945 our government has exploded 837. The Soviets trail with 606.

Stalnaker said she found it exhilarating to be there with such a broad range of women. All ages, lifestyles and geographical regions of the United States were well represented, along with a sprinkling of women from other countries.

"Women are mothers, and they feel a strong connection with life," she said.

Mary Payton, a 54-year-old Salem housewife, had never participated in anything like this before. She asked her husband (yes, asked) if she could do anything she wanted to celebrate Mother's Day. After he innocently consented, he was shocked to find out what she had in mind, she said.

That stretch of desert has never before been exposed to such a sea of concentrated female energy, undulating under colorful waves of flower- and ribbon-decorated, broad-brimmed hats. No official figures were available, but from the show of hands, I estimate mothers made up more than 60 percent of the gathering. And at least 10 percent were grandmothers you'd never expect to see in such a setting.

One petite grandmother, Frances Crow, 67, of Northampton, Mass., told me that this was her 21st arrest. But she said most of the women she spoke to told her this was their first time.

The vast majority of the women I asked also said this was their first. All of the first-timers said they had been thinking about doing it for a long time and that the appropriateness of choosing Mother's Day to make a strong statement in favor of a nuclear test ban had grown increasingly appealing the more they thought of it. I was surprised to hear my own thoughts reflected so consistently.

The women, most of them in white and pastels, created a striking contrast to the approximately 50 camouflaged and brown-uniformed sheriff's deputies and security officers, some of

them women, waiting with guns, riot sticks and clusters of white plastic handcuffs on the other side of the fence.

A helicopter circled overhead throughout the rally and arrests, and helmeted men in camouflage uniforms waited, ready for action, tucked in among the cactus and sagebrush, in camouflaged vehicles that were a cross between 'tune buggies and jeeps.

All the organizers for this event were women, although some men did fill support roles. All-women groups crossed the line to get arrested first, before any male/female groups. Then later, when the mixed groups crossed the line or climbed through the barbed wire, the women in these groups went before the men. I was told by organizers that the decision to operate in this way was made to force women to assume leadership roles, something they are often more reluctant than men to do.

Before anyone crossed the line onto DOE land, a spokesman for the Nye County Sheriff's Department informed organizers that the buses wouldn't be able to hold all the protesters.

In the past, those arrested have been bused 60 miles farther from Las Vegas to the tiny town of Beatty for booking and release there. But this time there were too many, so four buses were repeatedly filled and driven two miles into the test site, where 15 deputies in a temporary trailer office issued citations. Then we were reloaded on buses and driven back to near the rally site, about a quarter mile outside the fence.

As it was, the arrests and processing stretched from 11 a.m. until after 3 p.m. Some protesters recrossed the line and were rearrested several times.

Watching the 6 p.m. news coverage of the event from our hotel room at the Golden Spike that night, we were heartened to hear the commentator comparing the escalating numbers of arrests at the test site to the time period during the Vietnam protests, just before the tide of public opinion began to turn. Only time will tell if the analogy holds true.

In our non-violence training on Saturday, APT organizer and one of its founders, Nancy Hale, said, "We have a very rich history of using this kind of action to make the kinds of changes

that make us proud of the country we are today."

The arrests from this action were half as many as all the test site arrests in the past 30 years. People have been getting arrested there since 1957. As of the end of March, the Nye County sheriffs had made more than 1,571 arrests, according to an information sheet prepared by the organizers of this action — APT, the Nevada Desert Experience, Loretto Disarmament-Economic Conversion Committee and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

In fact, the flood of arrests has so overloaded the Nye County court and jail systems that at the end of April the county commissioners voted to discontinue the prosecution of trespassers. Charges have been dropped against the 438 arrested in February and probably will be dropped,

or possibly never even filed, against Sunday's protesters.

At the bottom of my citation is a place for the "complainant" to sign. Nobody signed it. All of the people in one affinity group from Portland gave their names as Benjamin Linder, after the young engineer from Portland recently slain by the Contras in Nicaragua. Their names were not contested. The arresting officers just kept moving people through as fast as possible.

But I do know I felt strong and alive, smelling the sagebrush crushed beneath our shoes as my friend Dorothy and I, holding hands, sidestepped the clumps of cactus and walked toward our camouflaged arresting officer.

I have a feeling flowers, gifts and the promise of dinner are going to feel like a mighty poor excuse for Mother's Day from now on.



About 150 protesters, primarily test site employees and their families, lined the road near the cattle crossing.



Deputies remove a couple who tied themselves together and sat down in the road to block a bus removing protesters.

**ROSES**  
12 FOR \$6.99  
Dandelions Flowers  
1710 Chambers • 485-1281

**TAN**  
Fast Convenient Relaxing Affordable  
10 VISITS  
SunShower on campus  
485-2323 • 874 E. 13th  
Updates by Koko's

## Judiciary committee urges Senate to approve divestment bill

By B.J. Thomsen  
Of the Emerald

SALEM — A bill that would divest state funds from South Africa and Namibia came one step closer to becoming a reality Tuesday.

**Legislative issues**

The bill, HB 2001, was passed out of the Senate Judiciary Committee during a work session to the full Senate with a do-pass recommendation and a subsequent recommendation to refer the bill to the

Senate Ways and Means Committee.

Committee Chairman Sen. Bill Frye, D-Cottage Grove, made the motion to recommend referral to the budgeting committee.

A split vote followed with some committee members reluctant to send the bill to ways and means for fear that it would not make it out of committee before the end of the session.

Sen. Jan Wyers, D-Portland, said he voted for the motion only because he said he knew Frye had gotten assurances from ways and means that the bill would be moved quickly out of that committee.

"I know that many of us would be quite upset if the bill is in committee for more than a couple of days," Wyers said.

A similar bill was vetoed two years ago by then-Gov. Vic Atiyeh. Gov. Neil

Goldschmidt, however, has promised to sign this legislation if passed by both the House and the Senate.

The bill breezed through the House late last month on a vote of 51-9.

Steve Nelson, ASUO president, attended the work session and afterward expressed disappointment that the bill wasn't moved to the Senate without the recommendation to send it to ways and means for consideration.

He said he was confident the bill would be passed by the Senate and be signed into law before the end of the session.

Late last month the State Board of Higher Education voted unanimously to support divesting higher education funds from South Africa.

Nelson testified before the House

Resources Committee in support of the bill last month.

"Students at the University of Oregon and in the State System of Higher Education in general have a long history of support for divestment," he told the committee.

"We find it hard to believe that people who have endowed our educational institutions in this state... would want their dollars used to deny the most basic rights to people based on the color of their skin," he said.

Nelson noted further that "as taxpayers in this state, most students... do not want their dollars used to give power to the only government in the world where racial separation and discrimination are written

into the constitution and the laws."

The divestment issue at the University dates back to 1977, when University students passed two ballot measures seeking to show disapproval of the policy of apartheid through economic sanctions.

The first measure denied companies involved in South African business ventures the right to recruit on the University campus. The second asked that the State Board and the University's development fund divest funds from any corporation involved with South Africa.

A 1978 opinion from the Oregon attorney general's office said the State Board, which already had voted 8-3 to divest funds from South Africa, could not legally do so.

**OREGON WEST**  
No initiation through the month of May.  
485-1624

**FREE FROZEN YOGURT TODAY 3-5 p.m.**  
Small size with minimum purchase of 25¢. Only 1 offer/person per day.  
**STUFF IT 1219 Alder**

## UO Bookstore

You can't beat our low, low photo prices

**Film & Photo Processing**

**Guaranteed Lowest Prices**  
We'll match or beat the price of any local photo coupon.

**One Day Service**  
In by 4 p.m. — back by NOON the next day (C41 color print film).

**Enlargements, Reprints & Slides**  
Great service and prices in your full service Photo Dept.

Your full service Photo Dept.

**UO Photo Contest ENTER AND WIN**  
May is National Photo Month

**UO BOOKSTORE**  
13th & Kincaid  
M-F 7:30-5:30  
SAT 10:00-4:00  
686-4331

**poppi's**  
GREEK TAVERNA

Real Greek Food  
Imported Beers,  
Greek Wines and  
Daily Specials

NOW  
Free Delivery on Campus  
Call for information

675 East 13th, Eugene 343-0846

Closed Tuesday

With this coupon you can buy a set of

**GUITAR STRINGS**  
for  
**1/2 PRICE**

Coupon expires 5/23/87

**music city**

380 East 40th, Eugene  
open evenings 'till 6  
Locally owned for 30 years

**Rays to Riches**

Second Hand Clothing

**NEED CASH?**  
We BUY used clothing.  
(New 2 yrs. old)

Call Mornings for Appt.  
344-7039

**10-6 Mon.-Sat.**  
360 E. 11th  
between Mill & High

**May Coupon — Special —**

**\$6 Off** reg. \$35.  
**Designer Nails**

Your nails will be thin, clear, strong and so natural looking they can be worn without polish.

**Enhancers**  
99 W. 10th, 2nd Floor Atrium, Downtown  
Mon-Sat 8-8 • 345-3491

**RESUMES** Give your resume a professional look, by having it typeset at Letter Perfect Graphics. 300 EMU. 686-5511 10-2 Mon-Fri

**Great thinkers— come check out our Philosophy section. One of the greats—the University Bookstore. In the Book Dept.**

**The Saga Continues WEDNESDAY NIGHT**  
at

**TRACK TOWN PIZZA**

Get a medium (12") **\$4.95**  
**One-Ingredient Pizza for ONLY...**

Why settle for less... than the BEST?!

**FREE DELIVERY**

484-2799  
1809 Franklin Blvd.